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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: Mitsuaki NAKAMURA and Keisuke IWASAKI

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FILED: Herewith

FOR: IMAGE PROCESSING DEVICE AND METHOD

Honorable Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Please amend the above-identified application as follows.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly add the following new claims.

--11. (new) The image processing device of claim 1,

wherein the contrast estimate means estimates contrast (Lv, Hv) as contrast of the input image, which is defined by a combination of luminance Lv corresponding to a color of lines and dots generated in the input image and luminance Hv corresponding to a color of a background of the input image, and

the luminance correction means raises the contrast (Lv, Hv) of the input image to a maximum of contrast (Vmin, Vmax) which is defined by a combination of lower limit of luminance Vmin and upper limit of luminance Vmax of possible luminances, so that a lower luminance and higher luminance of luminances Lv, Hv which define the contrast of the input image are converted to the lower limit of luminance Vmin and upper limit of luminance Vmax.